



Testimony of Garry Lapidus, Director, Injury Prevention Center at Connecticut Children's Medical Center and Hartford Hospital to the Education Committee in Support of Raised S.B. 316: An Act Concerning the Posting of Careline Information in Public Schools

March 2, 2016

Representative Fleischmann, Senator Slossberg and distinguished members of the Education Committee. My name is Garry Lapidus, and I direct the Injury Prevention Center at Connecticut Children's Medical Center and Hartford Hospital. I am an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. I provide this testimony in support of Raised Senate Bill 316: An Act Concerning the Posting of Careline Information in Public Schools.

The mission of the Injury Prevention Center at Connecticut Children's is to reduce injury and violence among Connecticut residents. To accomplish the mission of the Injury Prevention Center, we implement four core activities: research, education and training, community outreach programs, and policy/advocacy. I believe that this bill falls right in line with our mission.

In 2015, the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Program at Connecticut Children's Medical Center evaluated 912 children. That number is only the number of children that actually make it to the hospital. There are certainly many additional children who do not come to the hospital but are suffering at home. Most commonly, this is because the perpetrator is a family member or caregiver and the abuse or neglect has gone undetected by anyone outside of the home. Abuse and neglect that does not manifest itself in visible signs of abuse and trauma often goes unrecognized and unreported unless victims come forward seeking help.

Posting the Careline number in schools can help to inform students about the availability of assistance and increase the number of victims who receive help. The safe environment of school is an ideal place to reach children and youth who are suffering at home. Schools can play an important role in helping children receive the early intervention and services that are so critical to prevent further harm and prolonged trauma.

It is important that the information concerning the Careline be posted in locations that students visit and can access easily. Posting information in private locations such as restrooms or locker rooms would further enable students to access it without concern about their peers learning about the abuse or neglect. Also, the information should be made available in both Spanish and English in order to reach more students.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry Lapidus".

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